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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-third session

Draft report

Rapporteur: Ms. Hélène **Petit** (France)

Addendum

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

(*Item 3 (a)*)

Report of the Secretary-General on consolidated changes to the biennial programme plan as reflected in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

Programme 3
Disarmament

1. At its 13th meeting, on 13 June 2013, the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on consolidated changes to the biennial programme plan as reflected in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (A/68/75).

2. The Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament introduced the report and responded to queries raised by the Committee during its consideration of the report.

Discussion

3. Appreciation and support were expressed for the programme and the work of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. Delegations noted the explanations provided for changes, which were introduced in the overall orientation of the programme and subprogrammes 1 and 5.

4. The view was expressed that detailed information should be provided to have a clear understanding of the proposed changes and to better assist the Committee in making good recommendations to the General Assembly.

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5. A number of delegations expressed concern regarding the presentation of the changes resulting from the movement, from subprogramme 1 to subprogramme 5, of activities associated with expected accomplishment (c) and the related indicators of achievement (c) (i), (ii) and (iii) linked to the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme.

6. Some delegations questioned the need for presenting changes in the programme at the current stage, in the absence of new mandates that justified such changes. In that context, they questioned, in particular, the proposal to transfer the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme from Geneva to New York. Further explanation was sought to determine the rationale and the added value of such a transfer, taking into account that the centre of disarmament issues was located in Geneva. The view was expressed that such a proposal would create difficulties for some delegations and queries were raised to clarify the efficiencies to be gained by the Secretariat as a result. In addition, delegations expressed the opinion that, in practical terms, the proposal to transfer the Fellowship Programme to subprogramme 5 would give priority to regional issues over those of a global nature. Clarification was sought as to how the Office for Disarmament Affairs envisaged compliance with General Assembly resolutions, for example in ensuring geographical representation and gender balance in the selection of candidates for the Fellowship Programme.

7. Concern was expressed about the proposal to change the title of the branch which had substantive responsibility for the implementation of subprogramme 1, Multilateral negotiations on arms limitation and disarmament, from the "Conference on Disarmament Secretariat and Conference Support Branch" at the United Nations Office at Geneva, to the "Geneva Branch". The view was expressed that despite the explanations provided by the Secretariat, such a proposal decreased the visibility of the activities performed by the Secretariat related to the Conference on Disarmament. While it was noted that the objective of the proposal to change the title was to shorten and simplify the name, the view was also expressed that the name change itself did not reflect the mandate of the Office. Moreover, it would have some implications and would detract from the importance of the Conference.

8. Some delegations expressed serious concern about such a proposal and sought clarification regarding the impact of the name change at the intergovernmental level and whether prior consultations had been held with Member States on the proposal.

9. Clarification was also sought regarding the expectation of the Secretariat concerning the strategy related to furthering collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, as reflected in paragraph 7 of the report (A/68/75), and whether the Secretariat collaborated with similar institutes in New York.

10. A few delegations noted the changes in the organizational structure and post distribution as reflected in annex I to document A/68/6 (Sect. 4), in particular under subprogramme 2. They expressed concern about the impact of those changes on programme delivery, given the move of one post at the D-1 level from subprogramme 5 to subprogramme 2. In that connection, clarification was sought regarding the rationale for having two posts at the D-1 level under subprogramme 2 as a result of that change.

11. Concern was expressed by some delegations with regard to peace and security in Central Africa. Clarification was sought as to whether the situation in the Sahel region and the impact of the dissemination of arms on all States in the region, was taken into account, together with the inclusion of specific measures to combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

12. Further clarification was sought regarding the recommendations made by the Secretariat to combat the illicit circulation of conventional weapons and strengthen the customary actions of the United Nations to serve peace and security in Central Africa.

13. Some delegations sought clarification about the impact of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in particular the transfer of appropriate technology for peaceful uses, as a particular narrative to that effect had not been provided under the expected accomplishments of the programme.

14. The need for consultation with the First Committee on the proposed changes was also highlighted by some delegations.

Conclusions and recommendations

15. **The Committee, at the current stage, did not recommend that the General Assembly approve the proposed changes to the narrative of programme 3, Disarmament, contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/68/75).**